

**IN THE MATTER** of the Resource Management Act 1991  
(**RMA**)

**AND**

**IN THE MATTER** of an application by New Zealand  
Fruitgrowers' Charitable Trust to the  
Wellington City Council for a resource  
consent to reinstate a sign on the building  
located at 2 Jervois Quay, Wellington (**the  
Application**)

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**SUMMARY STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF ADAM WILD  
ON BEHALF OF NEW ZEALAND FRUITGROWERS' CHARITABLE TRUST  
(CONSERVATION ARCHITECT)**

**7 December 2022**

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**1. SUMMARY STATEMENT**

**1.1** This Summary Statement provides an overview of my Primary Statement of Evidence dated 22 November 2022. I have also responded to relevant aspects of the submitters' evidence and to Minute 3 from the Commissioner.

**2. SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE**

**2.1** The Huddart Parker Building is a listed heritage building included within the Operative Wellington District Plan (**ODP**). It also lies in the Post Office Square Heritage Area. The Huddart Parker Building is not listed in the New Zealand Heritage List/Rārangī Kōrero administered by Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga.

**2.2** The proposal represents a reinstatement of an historic condition recognised in itself as having heritage values in the WCC heritage inventory record. A sign fixed to the surviving metalwork signage frame atop the Huddart Parker Building was first established in the early 1960s; a period spanning nearly two thirds of the building's 97 years history thus far.

**2.3** The clock and temperature display on top of the building, a once familiar inner-city landmark and referred to fondly by a number of submitters, was erected in 1963. The WCC heritage inventory record for the Huddart Parker Building includes (under

Cultural value/Social value/Sentimental connection) recognition that the *“building once held community sentiment and connection for the temperature display and clock that was a prominent feature on the roof. This has somewhat diminished since the removal of the display.”*

- 2.4** Fixing the Proposed Sign to the existing signage frame above the building will not detract from the architecture of the building as the Proposed Sign will be clearly visually separate from the building and legibly unrelated to its Chicago-style architectural detailing.
- 2.5** In his section 42A report Mr Thornton concludes that while the Proposed Sign is *“unacceptable”* he (and Ms Stevens the Council’s heritage expert) consider a sign in the proposed location limited somehow to include *“the time, temperature and a cut out building or company logo, smaller than the signage proposed and reflective of the signage that was on the site”* would be acceptable. I do not consider that a reinstated sign would need to replicate the sign that was previously on the building, to that end the Proposed Sign represents more recent technology, just as the various iterations of the sign that were previously present on the building did.
- 2.6** Furthermore, the relatively compressed nature of the Post Office Square Heritage Area in addition to the high rooftop location of the proposed reinstated sign significantly mitigates perceived immediate effects arising from the sign on both the Huddart Parker Building and the Heritage Area. Views of the Proposed Sign are most apparent (and limited) to south-moving traffic on Customhouse Quay at some distance from the Huddart Parker Building; a view that becomes less complete and more removed from the normal line of sight as one nears the building.
- 2.7** The proposed sign will not present adverse effects on the heritage significance values or context of the Huddart Parker Building or the wider Post Office Square Heritage Area, nor will it affect the ability to interpret heritage features of the Huddart Parker Building, the wider Post Office Square Heritage Area, or other nearby heritage places. In the wider setting, the proposal does not represent cumulative adverse visual “clutter” as its elevation and the necessary horizontal distance to view the sign reduces its relative area within the receiving environment.
- 2.8** The Proposed Sign will maintain, and make no significant change to, the historic built condition, streetscape characteristics, and skyline within the area.

**2.9** As I set out in my Assessment of Effects on Heritage Report (**AEH**), from a heritage perspective, I consider that the sign proposed to be reinstated on the Huddart Parker Building is appropriate and supportable. Having reviewed the submissions and section 42A report prepared by the Council Officers I have not changed my opinion.

### **3. RESPONSE TO EVIDENCE FROM BOFFA MISKELL REGARDING HISTORIC HERITAGE EFFECTS**

#### **Response to Mr Jos Coolen**

**3.1** At Section 5 of his evidence Mr Coolen raises concerns he has with the integration of the proposed sign with “Architecture”. These concerns appear to be centred on two factors:

- (a) The relationship with architectural style; and
- (b) The reinstatement of an historical condition on the building.

#### ***Relationship with architectural style***

**3.2** I consider that Mr Coolen takes too-literal an interpretation of the relationship between the proposed sign and the architectural values of the Huddart Parker Building. In my opinion it is this contrast that reinforces the distinctive values of the Huddart Parker Building itself and mitigates perceived adverse effects. That contrast is in fact referred to by Mr Coolen himself at paragraph 6.8 of his evidence where he describes the proposed sign as contributing a “*bulk and mass that is in contrast with the fine detailed architecture of the Huddart Parker Building and adjacent heritage buildings ...*”.

**3.3** Mitigation of effects is further managed, in part, through an appreciation of the sign from various viewpoints (as I have illustrated in my AEH and in my evidence) that shows that the closer to the Huddart Parker Building the viewer gets, the less apparent the proposed sign is. Mr Coolen’s Figure 12 is particularly helpful in graphically mapping this phenomenon.

**3.4** Similarly, Mr Coolen’s paragraph 7.4 fails to acknowledge the perspective foreshortening the sign is subject to (set back from the rooftop parapet and face of the Huddart Parker Building) as the viewing point changes when moving from far away to close (reducing to zero directly in front of the building). While I accept that the existing rooftop frame (and any sign fixed to it) has varying degrees of visibility

depending on viewing proximity, I disagree with Mr Coolen's belief that the proposed sign is somehow "*incompatible with the more people focussed character of the Square*". It is that very perspectival phenomenon that sees the sign becoming increasing less apparent as one enters the Square and approaches the Huddart Parker Building that leaves the people-focussed character of the Square as a primary attribute.

**3.5** It is the proposed sign's elevation above the ground (and above the Huddart Parker Building), and its set back behind the shallow-stepped rooftop parapet and deep set dentilled cornice that help to screen the sign from closer views and remove its effects at a pedestrian scale within Post Office Square. Equally it is those architectural features that draw a distinguishing line between the building and the sign, helpfully illustrated in Mr Coolen's Figures 6 and 7, that have historically separated any sign in this location historically from the building and will continue to do so. As such, I disagree with Mr Coolen's understanding (at his paragraph 5.6) that the proposed sign "*will appear as being within the same vertical plane as the front façade*". As I have illustrated in Appendix A of my Statement of Evidence, the architectural detail at the top of the Huddart Parker Building breaks the plane of the building's elevation and the setback of the Proposed Sign from that detail means therefore that the Proposed Sign will not be perceived as "*a continuation of the front façade*" as Mr Coolen states. In my opinion the parapet and the cornice separate and disengage the building from the sign.

**3.6** The sign, except from distant views, cannot be seen in anything like the elevational composition Mr Coolen illustrates at his Figure 5.

**3.7** I agree with Mr Coolen's description of the Post Office Square's "*north facing aspect*". This sense of orientation and aspect means that the Huddart Parker Building and the proposed sign atop it are behind the viewer.

### ***Reinstatement of historical condition on the building***

**3.8** I believe Mr Coolen misinterprets (at his paragraphs 5.7, 5.10, 6.2) my reference to the proposed sign representing a "*reinstatement of signage*"<sup>1</sup> of an historic condition. At 7.8 of my evidence I said:

*"The Proposed Sign represents a reinstatement of signage fixed to the existing roof-mounted frame (that being an historic condition – my use of*

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<sup>1</sup> Statement of Evidence of Adam Wild, paragraph 7.8, page 15

*“historic” meaning “old” and not “heritage” per se) recognised in itself as having heritage values in the WCC heritage inventory record.”*

- 3.9** My intent was to recognise (as Mr Coolen himself does at his paragraph 5.10) that the Huddart Parker Building has experienced 50 years of various sign types. The proposed sign represents a continuation in that historic progression.
- 3.10** Mr Coolen is not correct (at paragraph 5.8 and 6.4 of his statement) in stating that *“the display installed in 1963 **only** [my emphasis] consisted of a clock and weather information”*. As Ms Stevens helpfully illustrates at image 1 of her *Addendum* to her ‘Section 42A Report’ the 1963 sign featured illuminated lettering advertising ‘CALTEX’. The *“original display”* referred to at paragraph 6.4 by Mr Coolen ignores that sign and fails to recognise that the time and weather *“display”* was not installed for some time as I acknowledged at my paragraph 8.2(a) on page 17 of my evidence.
- 3.11** I do not consider the exercise Mr Coolen has undertaken illustrated at Figure 14 of his evidence (and included in the video/timelapse material he has provided) are especially helpful as they describe a condition of a street level billboard taken from his fourth-floor office (a private place). This contrasts with the conditions the proposed sign will present to the street from its elevated and setback location high atop the Huddart Parker Building. I acknowledge Mr Wesley’s comment at paragraph 5.2 of his evidence that Boffa Miskell are *“not opposed to signage on the roof of the Huddart Parker Building”*.

#### **4. PROVISIONS OF THE PROPOSED DISTRICT PLAN**

- 4.1** Minute 3 of the Independent Hearing Commissioner<sup>2</sup> included a number of *Preliminary Questions*. Question “a” asked:

*“Given the building is a historic heritage item under the proposed District Plan, does the proposed sign trigger and consent requirements under that Plan?”*

- 4.2** Mr Aburn will respond to this question from a planning perspective.
- 4.3** However, I note that the application was lodged with the Wellington City Council before the Proposed District Plan (**PDP**) was notified on the 11<sup>th</sup> of July 2022. The AEH I prepared, and which was included in the application bundle, was

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<sup>2</sup> Reference (SR) No. 513399

finalised on the 31<sup>st</sup> of March 2022 (more than three months prior to public notification of the PDP) and addressed the assessment criteria for the restricted discretionary activity as set out in the ODP.

- 4.4** In response to the Commissioner’s question ‘a’ I have considered the application against the restricted discretionary activity status assessment criteria with respect to the ‘Signs’ Chapter in the PDP recognising the *Restricted Discretionary* activity status for digital signs as defined at *SIGN-R6* of the PDP.
- 4.5** **Policy SIGN-P3 – Signs and historic heritage** provides a series of seven matters for consideration. In considering these policies I believe the proposed sign complies with policies 1a, 1b, and 1c. I believe policy 1d (concerned with the quality of the design complimenting the heritage building, structure, or area) is appropriately met through a combination of historic precedent in this location and the values and clarity arising from the visual contrast between the proposed sign, the heritage building, and the elevation and set back of the sign above the heritage area. I believe Policy 1e is appropriately addressed through the technical management of the sign relative to ambient light levels (in accordance with industry standards).
- 4.6** **Policy SIGN-P3 – Signs and historic heritage Policy 1f** considers whether the proposed sign fulfils the intent of the *Heritage and Signs Design Guides*. I have read the Heritage Design Guide and note that G18 -G22 anticipate signage in the heritage context and on heritage buildings where this is appropriate, commonly based on the adoption of traditional signage locations (G19). G20 is of particular relevance to this application, in that it suggests that signage should be located “*below parapet level and below the highest parts of the building*”. I note that this application does not follow that guidance, instead relying on the historic precedent and presence of the existing 1963 signage frame to locate the proposed sign as G21 suggests.
- 4.7** As with all heritage management, each project must be assessed, considered, and guided on a case-by-case basis identifying the particular and distinctive nature and values of each place as has been done in this instance. I note that the Council’s heritage inventory record recognises the historic heritage values of the Huddart Parker Building to include social values associated with the rooftop sign and that the listing of the building does not exclude the sign or sign frame from that listing. G22 addresses illuminated and digital signs, counsels careful

consideration, and recommends illumination via external lighting (such a recommendation being inconsistent with the nature of digital technology).

**4.8** I also recognise that the Heritage Design Guide (at page 5) includes the following “*additional considerations*”:

*“Alongside specific guidelines, best practice notes and alternative approaches are sometimes included. These are intended to prompt consideration of design approaches or solutions that may be helpful in a given situation. Unlike the guidelines, these notes are non-statutory; their consideration is recommended to help achieve best practice design approaches and encourage quality built outcomes.”*

**4.9** In considering the intent of the Signs Design Guide I acknowledge the introductory paragraphs and particularly the following:

*“Signs design guide intent:  
Signs are essential to the city’s commercial areas and activity. They communicate information, add vitality and provide a sense of direction. But while they can enhance cityscape, they can also diminish it. If they are poorly designed or inappropriately located, signs can detract from the surrounding architecture, overwhelm public spaces and undermine streetscape quality. Similarly, too many signs can create visual clutter that reduces their effectiveness.”*

**4.10** The Signs Design Guide makes specific reference to illuminated and digital signs at G26 – 28 recognising the potential to dominate their surrounds, distract motorists, and cause glare at night. The guideline expresses concern when they are located in, or can be seen from, heritage buildings or areas. If appropriately designed signs can positively contribute to distinctive heritage contexts. G26 looks to ensure that signs do not “*detract from the architecture or quality of the host building or site*”. As I have assessed in my original assessment of effects, and reiterated in my evidence, I consider the proposed sign’s location on the existing historic signage frame on the roof of the Huddart Parker Building set back from the distinctive deep cornice and parapet does not compromise the architectural values of the building or dominate the Post Office Square. G27 and G28 are directly addressed appropriately in the application and will be appropriately managed.

**Adam Wild**

7 December 2022